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control by Parliament. "Yet although the modern House of Commons has the remedy for its grievances in its own hands, it still wastes its financial time in discussion on procedure arising out of fifteenth-century needs." It appears then from the author's viewpoint, and much to the surprise of the ardent admirers of the English budget system on this side of the water, that

If the whole financial system in Parliament is out of keeping with modern needs and conditions, it is not to be expected that members of Parliament will pursue with any enthusiasm the science of national economy. The dead weight of historical procedure does not encourage live financial criticism. The House of Commons cannot set about the control of the popular expenditure in the same way that it set about the control of unpopular monarchs.

In 1902 a select committee was appointed to consider parliamentary expenditure, but sixteen years passed without any progress until the appointment of the select committee of 1917-1918. This committee has done notable work in carefully examining parliamentary procedure and the expenditure of departments. Upon its reports there rests the possibility of some reforms in modern control of finance. With this hope in mind, the book closes with a discussion of ideal control. Through this it is hoped to secure, in President Taft's words, economy and efficiency, saving and saving for a purpose. While the way is plain through the process of ideals of economy for proper information, delegation of powers to permanent committees and sufficient information, yet "the will of the politician is uncertain. Nothing will be achieved until the House of Commons acquires a financial conscience; and it will never acquire a financial conscience as long as, on the one hand, it fears the Whips more than *2d.* on the Income Tax, and on the other hand, the public accounts do not plainly represent the truth."

FRANK L. McVEY.

Albania, Past and Present. By CONSTANTINE A. CHEKREZI. With an Introduction by CHARLES D. HAZEN, Professor of Modern History, Columbia University. (New York: Macmillan Company. 1919. Pp. xxii, 255. \$2.25.)

THIS book belongs to a type with which every student of Balkan affairs is thoroughly familiar and which combines special pleading for one of the Balkan groups with a close, first-hand, and relatively comprehensive knowledge of the geographic, historical, political, and economic facts appertaining to that group. The type may therefore be described as characterized by a certain amount of genuine information more or less artfully manipulated in the interest of a political programme. For that programme, nationalist and ultra-nationalist in scope, the Balkan author would enlist the reader's sympathy in the ultimate hope of persuading him to give his active support to the cause for which the book

stands. Propaganda therefore, such as in the prevailing travail of the world seems to be the only sort of product which a Balkan historian, or for that matter the historian of any section of the earth whatever, is capable of turning out.

Since history of this kind is all that ever comes to us out of the Balkan storm-centre, there was no reason why Mr. Chekrezi, an Albanian, should not have been moved to plead the cause of his people, especially as they have proved themselves woefully inferior to their Balkan rivals as noisy demonstrators at the bar of the world's opinion. Of course no one in his senses will conclude that this reticence was the effect of a superior modesty. The Albanians have been silent for the simple reason that they have dwelt in the almost inconceivable darkness which antedates the modern instruments of publicity. This oldest people of the peninsula has never had either a literature or a system of schools; until just the other day it has not even boasted an alphabet or a printed book. Illiterate, stalwart mountaineers, very handy with the rifle, the Albanians have never failed to command the respect of both friends and enemies, but, ignorant of everything beyond the narrow range of their hills, they trod contentedly in the footsteps of their fathers until they were as completely out of touch with the advancing civilization of Europe as the tribes of the African jungle. The author indicates the causes but hardly explains with anything like scientific adequacy the unfortunate stagnation of his countrymen. As a pleader rather than a historian he is much more interested in the remedial measures which under the stimulus of the nationalist impulse have recently been carried through and which, in his opinion, must in the near future raise the Albanian people to the educational level of its Balkan rivals. At least two-thirds of the book is concerned with the events of the last few years and incidentally with an accumulation of evidence that the fateful petrification of Albania has yielded to the modern spirit of change. In its passion to survive, Albania has learned that it must acquire the mental outlook and employ the economic tools and spiritual weapons of its neighbors. It must become European, as Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria, and Rumania became European a generation or two before Albania started. In a word, the Albanians desire to constitute a modern independent nation, and appeal to the moral sense of the world in support of their purpose. Unfortunately, that moral sense is hard to locate, especially when it is in conflict with victorious neighbors—in this case with the territorial plans of the Serbs, the Greeks, and the Italians. The author, who finished his book just before the congress of Paris came together, probably knows by now that the Albania of the future has for its shield and buckler its own indomitable spirit and nothing else besides.

FERDINAND SCHEVILL.